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ABSTRACT

This report describes Georgia's Gainesville College's (GC's) student retention program, assesses its effectiveness, and highlights recent or anticipated program changes. Part I offers background information on the college and its students and their educational plans and goals. Part II presents retention figures for full-time students, including fall-to-fall retention rates for first-time freshmen by race for fall 1982 through 1986; retention rates for all developmental studies, freshman, and sophomore students for the same period; and multiple-year retention rates by racial and enrollment categories. After part III examines associate degree graduation rates, part IV summarizes findings from reviews of the literature and local studies concerning the causes of attrition. Part V evaluates two programs developed at GC for improving retention, the developmental studies program and the minority advising program. Finally, part VI concludes that: (1) retention rates at Gainesville varied considerably across racial lines and enrollment categories; (2) almost no black students were attracted to GC as regularly admitted, full-time, first-time freshmen; (3) retention rates improved in the sophomore year among all student groups; and (4) retention rates were lower for part-time students than full-time students across enrollment and racial categories. A short annotated bibliography and an appendix with supporting retention rate data tables are also included. (EJV)

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INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT RETENTION PROGRESS REPORT

GAINESVILLE COLLEGE

1987 - 88

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I. INTRODUCTION

Gainesville College is a two-year unit of the University System of Georgia--a commuter, community-oriented college offering a broad range of transfer programs under the Associate of Arts and the Associate of Science degrees, and a limited number of career programs under the Associate of Applied Science degree. Additionally, the College offers the Associate of Applied Science degree in numerous vocational and technical skills areas in cooperation with Lanier Technical Institute and several other vocational/technical institutions located in the College's geographic region.

The formal mission statement of the College reflects its desire and intent to serve a population which incorporates a diversity of academic abilities and interests. In addition to providing opportunities for professional development and the pursuit of personal interests through workshops and short courses, the College is committed through its formal academic structure to adequately prepare those students who wish to continue their formal education at the baccalaureate degree level, to provide suitable programs for students who prefer two-year, career-related programs, and to provide quality instruction in the basic academic skill areas which will allow students the opportunity to further develop those essential skills in preparation for their enrollment in college-credit courses.

Briefly stated, the philosophical base from which the College operates reflects the belief that its purpose for being is to

provide to the citizens of the College's service area who want a college education the opportunity to achieve that goal. Compatible with that philosophy, the College has established minimal admissions requirements, resulting in the admission of students with a wide range of academic experiences, abilities, achievement levels, interests, and goals.

Examination of some of the characteristics of the population of the College's service area and its students reveals a number of factors which seem to have an impact upon the retention/attrition of students. The data in Table 3 show that, according to the 1980 census, the area which Gainesville College serves is considerably below the state of Georgia average in educational attainment.

TABLE 3

Educational Attainments
GC Service Area By County

Based on 1980 Census

County	% 0-8 Yrs. Elementary	% 1-3 Yrs. High School	% 4 Yrs. High School	% 1-3 Yrs. College	% 4 or More College	Median Yrs. Of School Completed
Hall	28.4	23.5	24.5	11.5	12.2	11.8
Gwinnett	12.9	15.4	32.9	19.9	18.9	12.7
Forsyth	27.4	21.8	30.8	11.3	8.7	12.0
Jackson	33.9	25.4	25.3	7.5	8.0	11.1
Barrow	34.5	27.8	21.8	8.4	7.5	10.8
Habersham	34.1	22.4	24.6	9.6	9.3	11.2
Dawson	39.2	24.1	25.6	6.6	4.4	10.5
Lumpkin	39.3	17.6	24.9	8.5	9.8	10.7
Pickens	40.8	21.3	22.6	8.4	6.9	10.4
Banks	35.5	25.0	28.5	6.1	5.0	10.9
White	33.9	18.1	27.5	11.1	9.6	11.7
Georgia	23.7	19.9	28.5	13.3	14.6	12.2

Table 4 indicates that, of the students entering Gainesville College over a 13-year period, the percentage requiring developmental studies has consistently ranged from the mid thirties to the low fifties.

The Entering Student Survey which was administered in the fall of 1986 revealed a number of pertinent factors: almost 20 percent of the respondents expected to "stop out" temporarily during their period of attendance; more than 30 percent expected to transfer to another college before completing the associate degree; almost 38 percent indicated that they would need assistance in selecting a career; approximately 36 percent indicated a need for assistance in selecting a major area of study. Relative to their academic planning, approximately three-fourths indicated that the decision to attend Gainesville College was made during or after the 12th grade, while less than half completed a college prep program in high school. Those indicating the need for special help in the areas of English, reading, mathematics, study skills/habits, test-taking skills, speaking and writing skills ranged from 38.3 percent to 55.9 percent.

Those factors enumerated in the previous paragraph are generally thought to negatively affect the retention rate of colleges. The challenge to Gainesville College is clear. In the face of that challenge, the College reaffirms a two-fold commitment: (1) to continue to provide opportunities to its diverse clientele, and (2) to strengthen its efforts to provide

the quality academic programs and services which will make it possible for those students to continue who have the desire and ability to benefit from additional college study. The sections of this interim report which follow will provide a brief assessment of current retention efforts based upon available data, a brief description of the primary elements of the College's retention program, and will call attention to changes that have been implemented within recent months and/or are under consideration.

TABLE 4

Entrance and Degree Completion
Developmental Studies Students

Fiscal Year	New Students	D. S. Students	Percent D.S. Students	Degree Completers	Completers Who Took D.S.	Percent Completers Took D.S.
1974-75	1,028	455	44.3%	151	29	19.3%
1975-76	1,272	626	49.2%	176	44	25.0%
1976-77	1,133	519	45.8%	153	49	32.0%
1977-78	1,085	548	50.5%	215	101	47.1%
1978-79	1,062	558	52.5%	154	65	42.2%
1979-80	1,163	572	49.2%	158	68	43.0%
1980-81	1,304	481	36.9%	170	66	38.8%
1981-82	1,272	491	38.6%	148	60	40.5%
1982-83	1,419	505	35.6%	166	63	38.0%
1983-84	1,373	622	45.3%	152	54	35.5%
1984-85	1,318	682	51.7%	196	73	37.2%
1985-86	1,251	532	42.5%	203	101	49.8%
1986-87	1,409	641	45.5%	210	85	40.5%
TOTALS	16,089	7,232	44.9%	2,252	857	38.1%

II. RETENTION RATES (Full-Time)

A. One Year (Fall to Fall) Rates

1. First-Time Freshmen by Race

One year fall-to-fall retention rates from Fall of 1982 were provided on the five separate charts included as Table 1 in the System's data format. These data were reviewed as developed at the System level but were reformatted and further analyzed as presented in Table 1A. The format allows an annual comparison of the same data for the five years by enrollment classification across the columns with the combined data compiled in frequency and percentages for the five-year period in the last column. This summary table (1A) will be utilized in developing a narrative discussion of these data. The enrollment categories presented in the first column will be followed in discussing the data.

For Developmental Studies-Black (DS-B), First-Time/Full-Time (FT/FT), the five years of data reveal small numbers (highest enrollment of 28 in 1982), with a significant range (28 in 1982 to as few as 8 in 1985), and an increase to 13 in 1986 which hopefully reversed a four-year slide in DS-B enrollment of FT/FT freshmen. The one-year retention figures for this group varied widely from 62.50 percent (5/8 in 1985-86) to a low point of 16.67 percent (3/18 in 1984-85). The combined data presented in the last column reflected 36.78 percent (32/87) for the five fall-to-fall comparisons.

The data for the enrollment classification Developmental Studies-All Other (DS-AO) are presented in the second row. They

TABLE 1

ONE-YEAR RETENTION RATES

FIRST-TIME FULL-TIME FRESHMEN BY RACE

		A # FTF Fall 1982	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1983	C # Graduated	D # Transferred*	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # FTF Fall 1983	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1984	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	28	9			32.14	20	10			50.00
	AO	401	231			57.61	236	123		6	54.66
Freshmen	B						2	2			100.00
	AO						165	106		14	72.72

		A # FTF Fall 1984	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1985	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # FTF Fall 1985	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1986	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	18	2		1	16.67	8	5			62.50
	AO	250	123		12	54.00	194	122		10	68.04
Freshmen	B	2	1			50.00	1				0.00
	AO	155	109		4	72.90	152	95		14	71.71

		A # FTF Fall 1986	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1987	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	13	5			38.46
	AO	253	135		17	60.07
Freshmen	B	4	2			50.00
	AO	174	110		20	74.71

*Number transferred to another University System institution

TABLE 1A

ONE-YEAR RETENTION RATES

FIRST-TIME FULL-TIME FRESHMEN BY RACE

(SUMMARY DATA TAKEN FROM UNIVERSITY SYSTEM TABLE 1)

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	Combined Data 1982-1986
DS-B	32.14 (9/28)	50.00 (10/20)	16.67 (3/18)	62.50 (5/8)	38.46 (5/13)	36.78 (32/87)
DS-AO	57.61 (231/401)	54.66 (129/236)	54.00 (135/250)	68.04 (132/194)	60.08 (152/253)	58.40 (779/1334)
FR-B	-----	100.00 (2/2)	50.00 (1/2)	0.00 (0/1)	50.00 (2/4)	55.56 (5/9)
FR-AO	-----	72.73 (120/165)	72.90 (113/155)	71.71 (109/152)	74.71 (130/174)	73.07 (472/646)
TOTAL DS	55.94 (240/429)	54.30 (139/256)	51.49 (138/268)	67.82 (137/202)	59.02 (157/266)	57.07 (811/1421)
TOTAL FR	-----	73.05 (122/167)	72.61 (114/157)	71.24 (109/153)	74.16 (132/178)	72.82 (477/655)
TOTAL B	32.14 (9/28)	54.55 (12/22)	20.00 (4/20)	55.56 (5/9)	41.18 (7/17)	38.54 (37/96)
TOTAL AO	57.61 (231/401)	62.09 (249/401)	61.23 (248/405)	69.65 (241/346)	66.04 (282/427)	63.18 (1251/1980)
GRAND TOTAL	55.94 (240/429)	61.70 (261/423)	59.29 (252/425)	69.30 (246/355)	65.09 (289/444)	62.04 (1288/2076)

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reveal a significant decline in initial enrollment in this category from Fall 1982 to Fall 1983 (401 - 236) with relatively stable numbers in the other years (1983--236, 1984--250, 1986--253) except for 1985 with a decline to 194. For the first three years the fall-to-fall retention rates for this enrollment category were 57.61 percent (1982-83), 54.66 percent (1983-84) and 54.00 percent (1984-85) revealing a degree of relative stability. The 1985-86 comparison jumped to 68.04 percent (132/194) with a slide back to 60.08 percent (152-253) for the 1986-87 study. The five-year average was 58.40 percent (779/1334) in this enrollment category.

The next enrollment category of regularly enrolled Freshmen-Black (FR-B) contains only 9 students for the four comparisons covered by this report. No effort will be made to analyze these data except to underscore how few regularly admitted first-time, full-time Black Americans have enrolled at Gainesville College over this time period.

A major enrollment category for the College is the Freshmen-All Other (FR-AO) group. The four years of data for that category revealed a degree of stability in numbers enrolled (165, 155, 152, 174) and little variation in the retention rates (72.73 percent, 72.90 percent, 71.71 percent, 74.71 percent). It might be noted that the 1986-87 retention rate (74.71 percent) exceeded the four-year average (73.07 percent) which might be a hopeful sign for the future.

Summary data are also presented in the remaining rows of

Table 1A. They will not be analyzed in detail as they tend to hide the significance of the differences across enrollment categories as discussed above.

Utilizing the recently released System-wide data by levels of institutions, an additional table (Table 1B) has been developed which allows a comparative review of Gainesville College's one-year retention success with FT/FT freshmen across racial and enrollment categories. Analysis of the comparative data in Table 1B indicates that, on all AO and TOT comparisons on both the 1986-87 study and for the five-year data generated locally, the College results exceed or come very close to the System 1986-87 averages. The College data for B comparisons are below the System 1986-87 averages on all comparisons.

TABLE 1B

One-Year Retention Rates for First-Time Full-Time Freshmen
System and Gainesville College Summaries--Fall 1986 to Fall 1987
and Gainesville College Five-Year Averages

		System Fall 1986 Enroll.	System Percent Retained 1987	GC 1986-87 Percent	GC Five-Year Average
DS	B	684	54.5%	38.46%	36.78%
	AO	1696	57.3%	60.08%	58.40%
	TOT	2380	56.5%	59.02%	57.07
F	B	163	62.0%	50.00%	55.56%
	AO	1915	71.7%	74.71%	73.07%
	TOT	2078	71.0%	74.16%	72.82%
TOT	B	847	56.0%	41.18%	38.54%
	AO	3611	64.9%	66.04%	63.18%
	TOT	4458	63.2%	65.09%	62.04%

DS = First-time Developmental Studies Students;
F = Regularly Admitted First-Time Freshmen;
B = Black;
AO = All Other Race*

*The All Other category includes all non-Black racial/ethnic groups and is composed primarily of white students.

2. Undergraduates by Race

Similar reformatting and additional analysis steps were taken with the data provided from System sources for full-time undergraduates in Table 2. The results of these steps are presented in Table 2A. The enrollment categories which appear in the first column are utilized in discussing these data in the same general manner used with Tables 1 and 1A.

A review of the data presented in the first row for the Developmental Studies-Black (DS-B) category reveals a steady decline in numbers for the first four years (32, 30, 25, 11) with a positive change to 19 in Fall 1986. The retention rates showed both a degree of stability (46.67 percent in 1983-84, 45.45 percent in 1985-86, 42.11 percent in 1986-87) and wide fluctuations in the other two years (28.13 percent in 1982-83, 16.00 percent in 1984-85). The average for the five year-to-year comparisons was 34.19 percent (40 of 117).

The data for the enrollment category Developmental Studies-All Other (DS-AO) are presented in the second row. They reveal some movement for the years studied (283, 352, 327, 265, 333). The retention rates ranged from a low of 49.49 percent in 1982-83 to a high point of 66.79 percent in 1985-86 with a fallback to 57.66 percent in 1986-87. The average over the five comparisons as noted in the last column was 56.15 percent (876/1560).

The numbers for the next enrollment category regularly enrolled Freshman-Black (FR-B), while still rather small, show

TABLE 2

ONE-YEAR RETENTION RATES

FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY RACE

		A # Fall 1982	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1983	C # Graduated	D # Transferred*	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # Fall 1983	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1984	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	32	9			28.12	30	10	2	2	46.67
	AO	283	140			49.49	352	166	16	12	55.11
Freshmen	B	20	3			15.00	15	6		1	46.67
	AO	373	198			53.08	425	244	5	38	67.53
Sophomores	B										
	AO										
Juniors	B										
	AO										
Seniors	B										
	AO										

		A # Fall 1984	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1985	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # Fall 1985	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1986	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	25	2		2	16.00	11	5			45.45
	AO	327	154	1	18	52.90	265	161	1	15	66.79
Freshmen	B	13	5		2	53.84	9	1		2	33.33
	AO	420	232	4	53	68.80	447	224	7	77	68.90
Sophomores	B	8	1	2		37.50	4	1	3		100.00
	AO	272	56	93	52	73.89	252	55	94	56	31.34
Juniors	B										
	AO										
Seniors	B										
	AO										

*Number transferred to another University System institution

TABLE 2 (cont.)

		A # Fall 1986	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1987	C # Graduated	D # Transferred*	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	19	8			42.10
	AO	333	166		26	57.65
Freshmen	B	11	4		1	45.45
	AO	455	239	4	68	68.35
Sophomores	B	4	1	1		50.00
	AO	306	59	27	143	74.83
Juniors	B					
	AO					
Seniors	B					
	AO					

*Number transferred to another University System institution

TABLE 2A

ONE-YEAR RETENTION RATES
FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY RACE
(SUMMARY DATA TAKEN FROM UNIVERSITY SYSTEM TABLE 2)

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	Combined Data 1982-1986
DS-B	28.13 (9/32)	46.67 (14/30)	16.00 (4/25)	45.45 (5/11)	42.11 (8/19)	34.19 (40/117)
DS-AO	49.49 (140/283)	55.11 (194/352)	52.91 (173/327)	66.79 (177/265)	57.66 (192/333)	56.15 (876/1560)
FR-B	15.00 (3/20)	46.67 (7/15)	53.85 (7/13)	33.33 (3/9)	45.45 (5/11)	36.76 (25/68)
FR-AO	53.08 (198/373)	67.53 (287/425)	68.81 (289/420)	68.90 (308/447)	68.35 (311/455)	65.71 (1393/2120)
SO-B	-----	-----	37.50 (3/8)	100.00 (4/4)	50.00 (2/4)	56.25 (9/16)
SO-AO	-----	-----	73.90 (201/272)	81.35 (205/252)	74.84 (229/306)	76.51 (635/830)
TOTAL DS	47.30 (149/315)	54.45 (208/382)	50.28 (177/352)	65.94 (182/276)	56.82 (200/352)	54.62 (916/1677)
TOTAL FR	51.15 (201/393)	66.82 (294/440)	68.36 (296/433)	68.20 (311/456)	67.81 (316/466)	64.81 (1418/2188)
TOTAL SO	-----	-----	72.86 (204/280)	81.64 (209/256)	74.52 (231/310)	76.12 (644/846)
TOTAL B	23.08 (12/52)	46.67 (21/45)	30.43 (14/46)	50.00 (12/24)	44.12 (15/34)	36.82 (74/201)
TOTAL AO	51.52 (338/656)	61.90 (481/777)	65.06 (663/1019)	71.58 (690/964)	66.91 (732/1094)	64.39 (2904/4510)
GRAND TOTAL	49.44 (350/708)	61.07 (502/822)	63.57 (677/1065)	71.05 (702/988)	66.22 (747/1128)	63.21 (2978/4711)

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some strength when compared to the figures for this category from Table 1-1A (9 students for the five comparisons covered). The total of 86 Black Americans would seem to indicate that the College is attracting more transfer American Blacks than FT/FT enrollees. Again, the enrollment figures varied widely from 20 in 1982 to 9 in 1985 with the slight upturn to 11 in 1986. The retention rates for these small groups ranged from 53.85 percent in 1984-85 to 15.00 percent in 1982-83 with the average for the five comparisons at 36.76 percent (25/68).

In the major enrollment category of Freshman-All Other (FR-AO), the data revealed a positive enrollment trend upward from 373 in 1982 to 455 in 1986. The retention rates showed a major jump in the first two comparisons, 53.08 percent in 1982-83 to 67.53 percent in 1983-84 with a strong degree of consistency over the next three comparisons (68.81 percent, 68.90 percent, 68.35 percent). The overall average for this enrollment category was 65.71 percent (1393/2120).

Sophomore data have been made available for the past three retention studies. They are included by race in the next two rows. While the numbers for Sophomore-Black (SO-B) remain quite small, the retention percentages are somewhat higher but must be cautiously interpreted--37.50 percent (3/8) in 1984-85, 100 percent (4/4) in 1985-86, 50 percent (2/4) in 1986-87, and 56.25 percent (9/16) overall.

For the Sophomore-All Other (SO-AO), the data are most encouraging with an average for the three comparisons of 76.51 percent (635/830) with a high for this category of 81.35 percent (205/252) in 1985-86.

B. Multiple Year Retention Rates

Data provided in Table 5 by System sources track the multiple year retention success from Fall 1983 to Fall 1987 by racial and enrollment categories. Utilizing the recently supplied System data by types of institutions on these measures, a comparison of Gainesville College data to System averages for two-year institutions is possible. For the dominant regularly admitted AO enrollment category, the four comparisons are summarized below:

	System	GC
One-Year	67.9%	72.72%
Two-Year	58.0%	67.27%
Three-Year	52.4%	64.84%
Four-Year	52.7%	60.00%

These data show that on this measure the College performance exceeded the System average on all four comparisons. Similarly, the DS/AO data are provided below:

	System	GC
One-Year	50.4%	54.66%
Two-Year	34.4%	38.98%
Three-Year	26.9%	31.35%
Four-Year	27.2%	31.35%

These data also show that on this measure the College performance exceeded the System average on all four comparisons.

The small numbers involved when DS/B and regularly admitted Black students are considered make similar comparison of College and System data most tenuous. They are not presented in a

TABLE 5

MULTIPLE YEAR RETENTION RATES

FALL 1983 FIRST-TIME FULL-TIME FRESHMAN CLASS

			Status For Same Students In:											
		A # Entering Fall 1983	Fall 1984 (one year later)			1-Yr. Rate	Fall 1985 (two years later)			2-Yr. Rate	Fall 1986 (three years later)			3-Yr. Rate
			E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A	E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A	E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A
Developmental Studies	B	20	10			50.00	2		2	20.00	2	2	3	35.00
	AO	236	123			54.66	52	1	39	38.98	12	26	36	31.35
Reg. Admitted Freshmen	B	2	2			100.00	1			50.00		1		50.00
	AO	165	106		14	72.72	41	6	64	67.27	11	57	39	64.84

		Status For Same Students In:			
		Fall 1987 (four years later)			4-Yr. Rate
		E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A
Developmental	B		1	2	15.00
Studies	AO	11	15	48	31.35
Reg. Admitted	B		1		50.00
Freshmen	AO	7	31	61	60.00

E = Still enrolled at the institution during the designated fall quarter
G = Graduated since fall 1983 (cumulative)
T = Transferred and enrolled at another University System institution during the designated fall quarter

tabular format. However, on all such comparisons, the College retention rate is less than that of the System on both enrollment categories.

Part-Time Students Tables

Tables for part-time students which parallel the data included on full-time students have been prepared and included as appendices to this report. While not discussed in a narrative manner, the data tables are being considered as the College attempts to develop more effective retention strategies with part-time students who comprise a significant portion of students served by the institution.

III. GRADUATION RATES

The first available set of data relative to Associate Degree graduation rates (FT/FT freshmen who entered in the Fall of 1984 who had received an Associate Degree within three years--through Summer, 1987) is presented in Table 8.

TABLE 8

ASSOCIATE DEGREE GRADUATION RATE

		A	For Same Students B	
		# Full-Time First Time Freshmen Fall 1984	Cumulative # Receiving Associate Degree By 1987	Graduation Rate (B/A)
Developmental Studies	B	18	0	00.00
	AO	250	30	12.00
Freshmen	B	2	1	50.00
	AO	155	47	30.30

The data indicate that only one Black student (regularly admitted 1/2) and none of the 18 DS-B had graduated. Similar AO data by enrollment category were 30 of 250 (12%) DS students and 47 of 155 (30.3%) AO students. Comparative System data are not yet available.

IV. CAUSES OF ATTRITION

Gainesville College and its students seem to possess many of the characteristics which have been found to be related to high attrition rates. Based upon the findings commonly described in the literature and upon information gleaned from local studies, it seems reasonable to conclude that among the major causes of attrition at Gainesville College are the following:

1. Most students come from an area in which the level of educational attainment is below that of the national and state average.
2. The large percentage of students required to take developmental studies courses indicates inadequate preparation for college study.
3. Approximately three-fourths of the students are combining work and other responsibilities with study, with many reporting that they are working 40 or more hours per week.
4. Many students indicate that they are uncertain of their college major and career objective--characteristics which seem to be related to a relatively low level of commitment to college.
5. Being a commuter college, the College attracts students who have limited opportunities outside the classroom for interaction with faculty and other students, thereby making it difficult to develop a sense of "belonging."
6. A large number of students attend intermittently rather than continuously, which may result in inflated

attrition figures. The 1987 Retention Study reports that for any given quarter, approximately 30 percent of Gainesville College students will not enroll in the subsequent quarter.

Table 6 provides a summary of the reasons for withdrawal given by the 485 enrolled students who withdrew during the four quarters, Spring 1987-Winter 1988. Almost 28 percent withdrew for reasons related to finances, jobs, and changes in career plans. More than 26 percent gave as the primary reason for withdrawal personal health or personal/family problems. Of the 374 withdrawal students who responded to the question about their plans for the immediate future, 60.43 percent indicated that they expected to be employed in full-time jobs.

Students who withdrew were asked about their plans to return to Gainesville College. Of the 393 responding to that question, 61.32 percent indicated they planned to return and 29.77 percent were "not sure." Only 8.91 percent stated that they did not plan to return.

Personnel in the Admissions Office attempted to call the 143 students who withdrew during winter quarter 1988 to inquire about their future plans and to offer them assistance if needed. Records show that 50 of those students (34.97 percent) are enrolled in the spring quarter 1988. Twenty additional students reached through the telephone survey indicated that they plan to return either summer quarter or fall quarter. Several indicated that they expected to return but weren't sure when they would do so.

TABLE 6

WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

SPRING 1987 - WINTER 1988

Reasons for Withdrawal: (N= 485)	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Total	Percent
Financial Reasons	8	5	14	12	39	8.04
Received Job Offer	3	6	4	9	22	4.54
Change in Work Hours	11	7	20	10	48	9.90
Moved From the Area	1	3	4	8	16	3.30
No Transportation	1	1	4	6	12	2.47
Personal Health Reasons	10	9	21	16	56	11.55
Personal/Family Problems	21	10	22	19	72	14.85
Course(s) Cancelled	1	1	1	--	3	0.62
Courses Too Difficult	5	14	4	3	26	5.36
No Time For Study	13	13	18	5	49	10.10
Don't Like Course	1	1	2	--	4	0.82
Don't Need Course	--	--	1	1	2	0.41
Career Plans Changed	4	4	8	10	26	5.36
Suspension	7	3	1	14	25	5.15
Other (Miscellaneous)	16	20	19	30	85	17.53
Totals:	102	97	143	143	485	100.00
Do you plan to return to GC? (N= 393)						
Yes	50	51	68	72	241	61.32
No	4	9	14	8	35	8.91
Not Sure	25	17	39	36	117	29.77
Totals:	79	77	121	116	393	100.00
Plans for Immediate Future? (N= 374)						
Full-Time Employment	50	36	73	67	226	60.43
Enroll in Another School	9	8	13	12	42	11.23
Other	19	25	32	30	106	28.34
Totals:	78	69	118	109	374	100.00

(Information taken from "Student Request to be Withdrawn" form)

The causes of attrition previously stated are also applicable to Black students. Data included in Section II of this report indicate that inadequate academic preparation may be a more significant factor for Blacks than for the total student population. Those data also reflect the small number of Black students who are enrolled--a factor which is thought to make it even more difficult for Black students to establish a sense of identity with and belonging to the College. Similarly, the College has not been as successful as it would like to be in attracting Black faculty and professional staff, thereby resulting in limited available role models for Black students.

In April, 1988, the President of the College wrote to the 50 Black students who had not registered for classes in the spring quarter but who had been enrolled in one or more of the three preceding quarters. The primary purposes of the communication were to affirm the College's interest in their personal and career development, to ascertain the reasons for their not continuing at Gainesville College, and to offer assistance as they develop and carry out their plans for the future.

Only seven responses to the brief survey were received by the requested return date. A follow-up telephone contact was conducted, through which information was obtained regarding 19 additional students, giving a total response rate of 52 percent.

The following is a summary of the primary reasons given for not continuing at Gainesville College:

Unduplicated Number (N=26)	Primary Reason
4	Completed requirements for graduation
7	Attending a 4-year University System institution
3	Attending a non-System college
4	Attending an unidentified college
5	Working
1	Joined the Air Force
1	Had surgery
1	Had automobile accident

Examination of the summary data reveals that 53.85 percent (14 of 26) of the respondents gave attendance at another college as their primary reason for not continuing at Gainesville College. Of the remaining 12 respondents: two are currently enrolled in a college, two indicated they will return to the College in summer or fall quarter, one is enrolled in a vocational/technical school, and one plans to enroll in a vocational/technical school.

Six respondents gave no indication as to whether or not they expect to resume their college studies. It is encouraging to note that, of the 26 students responding to this survey, 20 (76.92 percent) are currently pursuing or have definite plans in the future to pursue their educational goals.

V. EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING STUDENT RETENTION

Gainesville College subscribes to the belief that the retention of students should not be the primary objective. Instead, it is believed that retention should and will be a byproduct of a quality educational program designed to provide appropriate experiences to facilitate the academic and personal development of its students.

The focus of its retention program is, therefore, upon a competent and caring faculty and professional staff working closely with students to provide instructional and out-of-class experiences which will maximize their growth and development. Following are some of the more specific elements and activities which form the retention program at Gainesville College:

1. The evaluation and appropriate course placement of new students
2. Developmental studies courses in the area of English, mathematics, and reading
3. Academic advisement by the academic divisions
4. Financial aid programs
5. Orientation program for new students
6. Conferences with special groups of students, including developmental studies repeaters, excessive absentees, those on academic probation, first quarter students, and those who have not selected a college major or decided upon a career objective
7. Minority Advising Program
8. Follow-up contacts with students who withdraw or who do not return each quarter

9. The utilization in the planning process of feedback obtained from students and alumni via surveys

Three of the elements enumerated above which have experienced the most significant changes are Financial Aid, Developmental Studies (D.S.), and the Minority Advising Program (M.A.P.). Comparison of the 1986-87 financial aid annual report with that of the 1985-86 report reveals an increase of 25.99 percent in the number of students served (354 to 446) with an increase in the amount of aid from $453,980 to $541,103 (19.19 percent). Aid to Black students increased 112.77 percent ($24,066 to $51,205), with the number of Black students served increasing from 25 to 42 (68.00 percent). The Gainesville College Foundation continues to increase its support for student scholarships, providing a total of $104,124 in 1986-87, with an anticipated increase to more than $132,000 in the current year.

Major changes in the administration of the D.S. program and the M.A.P. were made this year, with responsibility for administering D.S. assigned to the Academic Support Services unit and the Dean of the College assuming responsibility for the direct supervision of the M.A.P. The sections which follow give more detailed descriptions of the changes and activities of those two elements of the retention program.

Developmental Studies Program

One of the top priorities of the administration, faculty and staff at Gainesville College is to help students reach their academic goals. All involved are mindful that the more successful students are in their classes, the more likely they

are to persevere through the quarters and ultimately to graduate. Therefore, much attention is given to maintaining and/or improving the academic welfare of students. In the area of Academic Support Services, comprised of D.S., Regents' Remediation, and the Open Learning Laboratory, personnel are engaged in the following activities:

1. At the time of registration, staff members check students' schedules to be sure that they are enrolled in any required D.S.. course(s) and/or that they are not enrolled in a course for which a D.S. course is a prerequisite. Any necessary changes are made by the end of the Drop/Add period so that the students miss as few class days as possible.

2. Beginning the third week of the quarter, instructors of D.S. courses send the names of students who are doing poorly in their classes to the Coordinator. The Coordinator calls those students in for an informal conference and encourages them to make use of the tutorial services available in the Open Learning Lab. Students are asked to report their next test grade to the Coordinator; many do so.

3. At the end of the quarter, D.S. students who are in very serious academic difficulty are called in for a formal conference chaired by the Coordinator and attended by the students' instructors, a counselor from the Guidance Center, and occasionally the Dean of the College. In these sessions, each student's problems are discussed and various alternatives are explored. Often, an appointment is set up with the counselor so that the student can investigate various career goals. The

Coordinator then writes each student a letter summarizing the decisions made at the conference, informing him/her of the availability of tutorial assistance, and reminding him/her of any future appointments or other obligations.

4. The Coordinator holds regular monthly (or more frequent, if necessary) meetings with liaison faculty from the reading, English, and mathematics departments. At these meetings, information is passed along and various problems are worked out so that all faculty teaching D.S. courses may be aware of the latest developments that might affect their students.

5. Once a quarter a meeting of all faculty who are teaching D.S. courses and other interested faculty/staff is held. At this meeting, items of general concern are discussed.

6. "Added Dimensions in Reading," a course for students who must repeat D.S. Reading, was added to the schedule. In this course the instructor uses the educational program of a current news periodical and emphasizes the vocabulary development and the improvement of more sophisticated comprehension skills. Students have a more positive attitude toward their course work because they feel they are "progressing" rather than merely "repeating."

7. Instructors in D.S. Math have reorganized the two D.S. courses so that students who complete them will have an even better chance of succeeding in the college-level algebra course.

8. In the area of staff development, three members of the administration and faculty attended the Conference on the Freshman Year Experience at the University of South Carolina in February, 1988, and returned with ideas for an "Extended

Orientation" program that will be designed to give all Gainesville College students an opportunity to engage in intellectual and aesthetic experiences beyond the classroom. Other personnel attended A.C.T. conferences on Academic Advising in Atlanta in October, 1987, and Recruitment and Retention Strategies in Atlanta in March, 1988, and acquired ideas that will help improve effectiveness in those areas.

Minority Advising Program

During the current year the M.A.P. was under the direct coordination of the Dean of the College. A major effort was made to utilize the recently reorganized Black Student Association in an advisory capacity to the M.A.P. The Dean met on two occasions during the fall quarter with that group and invited their support for the M.A.P. efforts during the year. Among those who have participated, the members of the Black Student Association have been most active.

Fall quarter activities included discussion sessions on the role of the Black student on the predominantly white campus which involved M.A.P. volunteers from the College faculty and staff, a social event just prior to the holiday break where the President addressed the group, and a winter focus on getting students matched up with faculty and staff volunteers in tutoring, and study help sessions. In February Black History Month activities were underwritten by the M.A.P. staff. During the spring quarter several students, accompanied by M.A.P. volunteers--a faculty member and a staff member, attended the Georgia State University Conference on Black Students on White Campuses. M.A.P.

volunteer staff attended the University System M.A.P. Conference in April.

Students identified through M.A.P. activities have been asked to serve on a search committee for the pending appointment of a staff member who will have some lead responsibility for minority affairs.

While the number of native American Black students at Gainesville College is small (approximately 52 in a population of 1900), there seems to be an improvement in the level of retention of Black students from quarter to quarter. There were a total of 103 Black students enrolled during the four quarters--Summer, 1987-Spring, 1988. Seventy-nine Black students enrolled during the 1987-88 academic year (fall, winter, spring quarters) with approximately equal numbers each quarter (52, 51, 53, respectively). Of the 52 Black students enrolled in the fall quarter, 71.15 percent (37) were enrolled winter quarter, 57.69 percent (30) were enrolled spring quarter, and 53.85 percent (28) were enrolled all three quarters.

Gainesville College continues to evaluate its retention efforts and make changes designed to improve its efforts. The annual Dean's Workshop series in 1987 centered around discussions of what the College should provide for its constituents, with the 1988 series extending that discussion to consider ways of assessing its success. Specific plans for the 1988-89 year include the appointment of a professional staff person with one-half time assignment to minority affairs; the establishment

of an office with part-time professional assignment to the coordination of institutional research and planning functions; the extension of the student activity period to five days per week in an effort to provide more opportunity for out-of-class contacts between students and faculty and to increase opportunities for more involvement of students and faculty in campus activities; an extension of orientation activities to include a minimum of three to four convocations or other appropriate activities each quarter; and the initiation in the fall quarter of a planned three-year cycle of evening course offerings which will provide greater diversification and will respond particularly to the needs of evening students who wish to pursue programs in the areas of science and mathematics.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on the tabular data and the narrative analysis of it, the following observations seem appropriate:

1. Retention success at Gainesville College varies considerably across racial lines and enrollment categories with retention more successful with regularly enrolled students and with All Others in in all enrollment classifications as compared to Blacks.
2. Almost no Blacks are being attracted to Gainesville College as regularly admitted students as full-time/ first-time freshmen.
3. The College is attracting relatively more regularly admissible Blacks on a full-time study basis as transfer students.
4. Sophomore retention success improves with all students and quite dramatically with All Other students.
5. A degree of stability and limited positive movement in retention success is present in most enrollment categories.
6. The small numbers in Black enrollment make it almost impossible to validly analyze these data except in the most tentative and guarded ways.
7. Retention success with part-time students is somewhat less than parallel success with full-time students across enrollment categories and racial lines.

VII. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adelman, Clifford. "Transfer Rates and the Going Mythologies." Change. Vol. 20, No. 1. 1988.

This article, written by a senior associate in the Office of Research at the U.S. Department of Education, provides data collected from the National Longitudinal Study (NLS) of the High School Graduating Class of 1972 and from follow-up methods through 1986. The data presented lead the reader to draw eight major conclusions relative to transfer rates of students--some confirming established opinions and/or results of more limited studies, others challenging the "going mythology."

Arbeiter, Solomon. "Enrollment of Blacks in College: Is the Supply of Black High School Graduates Adequate? Is the Demand for College by Blacks Weakening?" Research and Development Update. The College Board. New York. October, 1987.

The entire seven-page publication explores minority enrollment in higher education institutions during the past decade. It cites the fact that black enrollment, both full-time and part-time, declined consistently from the high point of enrollment during 1978-80 to 1984 when the U.S. Department of Education data were released, and attempts to explain the causes for this decline.

Donovan, Richard A. and Schaier-Peleg, Barbara. "Making Transfer Work: A Practical Blueprint for Colleges." Change. Vol. 20, No. 1. 1988.

The article focuses on a report produced by 24 community colleges who were part of a program of the Ford Foundation and who had a concern that minority students were being shortchanged by declining transfer rates. The report: "Transfer: Making It Work," authored by Donovan and Schaier-Peleg, offered 34 recommendations that contribute to successful transfer programs and productive collaboration between two-year and four-year colleges.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1

ONE-YEAR RETENTION RATES

FIRST-TIME PART-TIME FRESHMEN BY RACE

		A # FTF Fall 1982	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1983	C # Graduated	D # Transferred*	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # FTF Fall 1983	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1984	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B						2				0.00
	AO						51	13			25.49
Freshmen	B										00.00
	AO						52	12		2	26.92

		A # FTF Fall 1984	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1985	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # FTF Fall 1985	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1986	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	2				00.00	1				00.00
	AO	66	21		3	36.36	32	12		2	43.75
Freshmen	B	1				00.00	1				00.00
	AO	61	26		3	47.54	51	13		2	29.41

		A # FTF Fall 1986	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1987	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	4				00.00
	AO	51	14		4	35.29
Freshmen	B					00.00
	AO	51	23		5	54.90

*Number transferred to another University System institution

TABLE 2

ONE-YEAR RETENTION RATES

PART-TIME UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY RACE

		A # Fall 1982	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1983	C # Graduated	D # Transferred*	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # Fall 1983	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1984	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B						5				0.00
	AO						108	32	2	1	32.40
Freshmen	B						3	1			33.33
	AO						253	82		7	35.17
Sophomores	B						5	2	1		60.00
	AO						147	35	22	7	43.53
Juniors	B										
	AO										
Seniors	B										
	AO										

		A # Fall 1984	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1985	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A	A # Fall 1985	For Same Students: B # Still Enrolled Fall 1986	C # Graduated	D # Transferred	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	5			1	20.00	3	1		1	66.66
	AO	104	35		5	38.46	82	33		5	46.34
Freshmen	B	8	2			25.00	7	1			14.28
	AO	250	94		17	44.40	249	93	2	16	44.57
Sophomores	B	10	3	3	1	70.00	8	2	1		37.50
	AO	209	39	45	24	51.67	214	50	49	23	57.00
Juniors	B										
	AO										
Seniors	B										
	AO										

*Number transferred to another University System institution

PART-TIME UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS BY RACE

TABLE 2 (cont.)

		A	For Same Students:			
		# Fall 1986	B # Still Enrolled Fall 1987	C # Graduated	D # Transferred*	Retention Rate (B+C+D)/A
Developmental Studies	B	9	1			11.11
	AO	123	32	1	10	34.95
Freshmen	B	4	1		1	50.00
	AO	187	50	22	39	59.35
Sophomores	B					
	AO					
Juniors	B					
	AO					
Seniors	B					
	AO					

*Number transferred to another University System institution

TABLE 5

MULTIPLE YEAR RETENTION RATES

FALL 1983 FIRST-TIME PART-TIME FRESHMAN CLASS

		A	Status For Same Students In:											
		# Entering Fall 1983	Fall 1984 (one year later)			1-Yr. Rate	Fall 1985 (two years later)			2-Yr. Rate	Fall 1986 (three years later)			3-Yr. Rate
			E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A	E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A	E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A
Developmental Studies	B	2				00.00				00.00				00.00
	AO	51	13			25.49	8		2	19.60	2	2	4	15.68
Reg. Admitted Freshmen	B					00.00				00.00				00.00
	AO	52	12		2	26.92	2		6	15.38	3	2	4	17.30

		Status For Same Students In:			
		Fall 1987 (four years later)			4-Yr. Rate
		E	G	T	(E+G+T)/A
Developmental Studies	B				00.00
	AO	1	2	6	17.64
Reg. Admitted Freshmen	B				00.00
	AO		1	8	17.30

E = Still enrolled at the institution during the designated fall quarter
G = Graduated since fall 1983 (cumulative)
T = Transferred and enrolled at another University System institution during the designated fall quarter

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